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Lin et al.

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(54) **SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR ESTIMATING CELL CENTER POSITION FOR CELL ID BASED POSITIONING**

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(60) Provisional application No. 60/318,806, filed on Sep. 10, 2001.

(51) **Int. Cl.**
H04W 24/00 (2009.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.** **455/456.6**; 455/457; 455/440; 455/422.1; 455/456.1

(58) **Field of Classification Search** 455/456.6, 455/457, 440, 422.1, 456.1

See application file for complete search history.

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Primary Examiner — Patrick Edouard

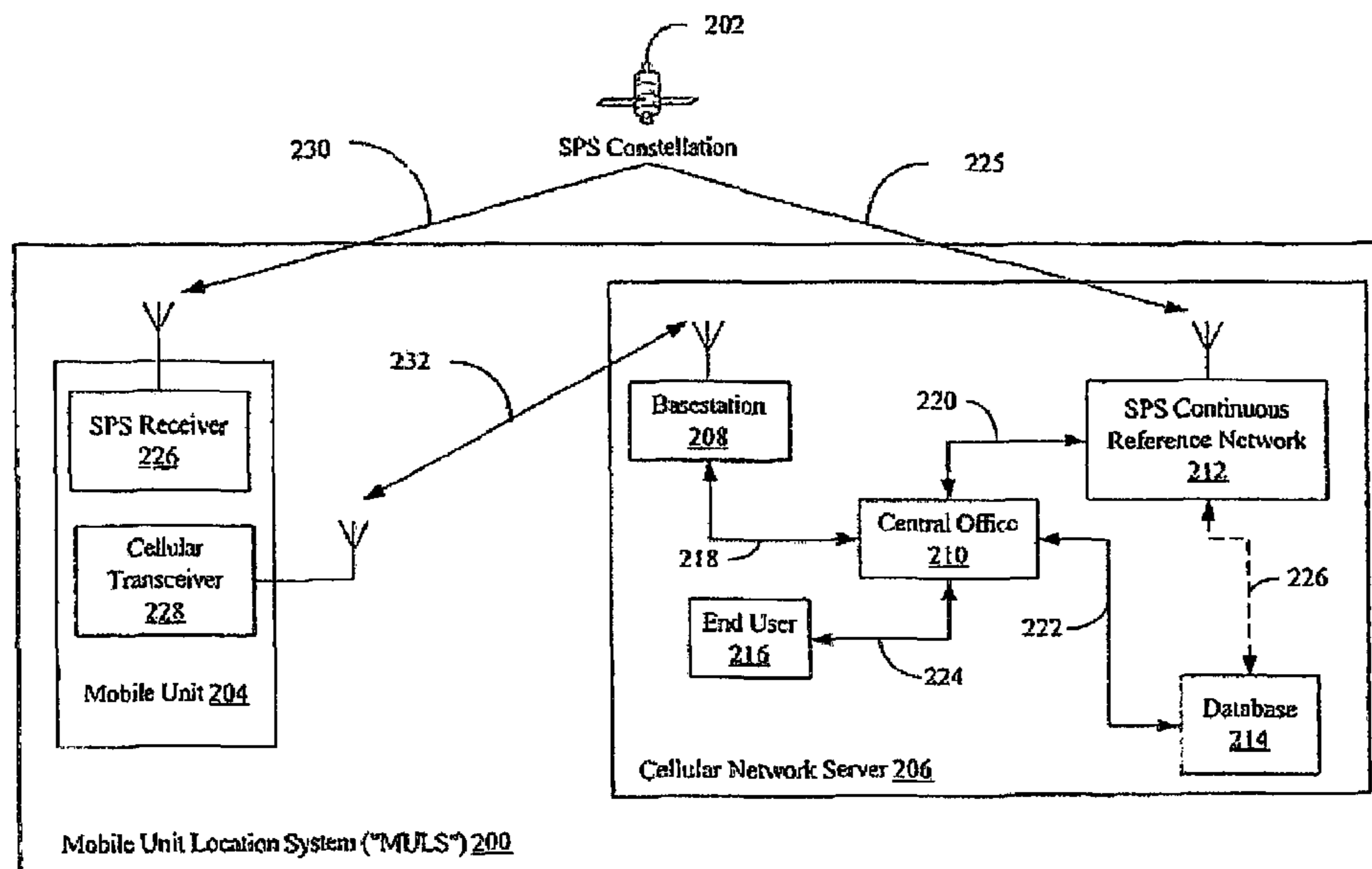
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

Systems and methods for estimating a cell center location in a wireless communication system having an interface to a satellite positioning system (“SPS”) such as for example, a Geosynchronous Positioning System (“GPS”). The wireless communication system provides service to mobile stations within a cell, each mobile station includes a SPS receiver. Examples of the systems and methods for estimating a cell center location analyze the mobile station locations in a cell as a uniform distribution of mobile station locations and calculate a statistical measure characterizing the mobile station locations as a function of the mobile station locations. In one example, the statistical measure is a maximum likelihood mobile station location. In another example, the statistical measure is the mean mobile station location in the cell. The estimated cell center location may be used to approximate the location of the mobile station during a warm or cold restart of the SPS receiver part of the mobile station.

26 Claims, 13 Drawing Sheets



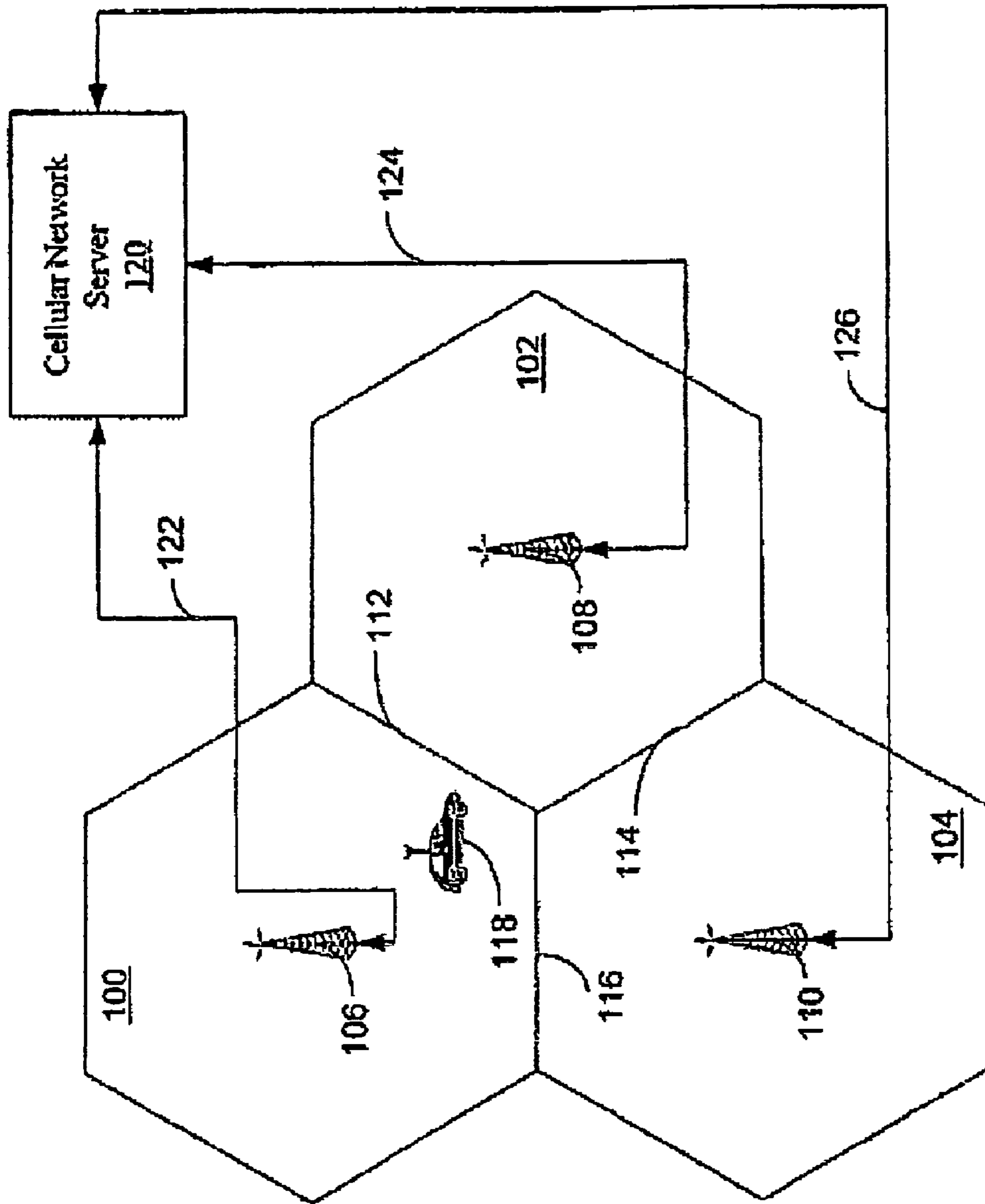


FIG. 1

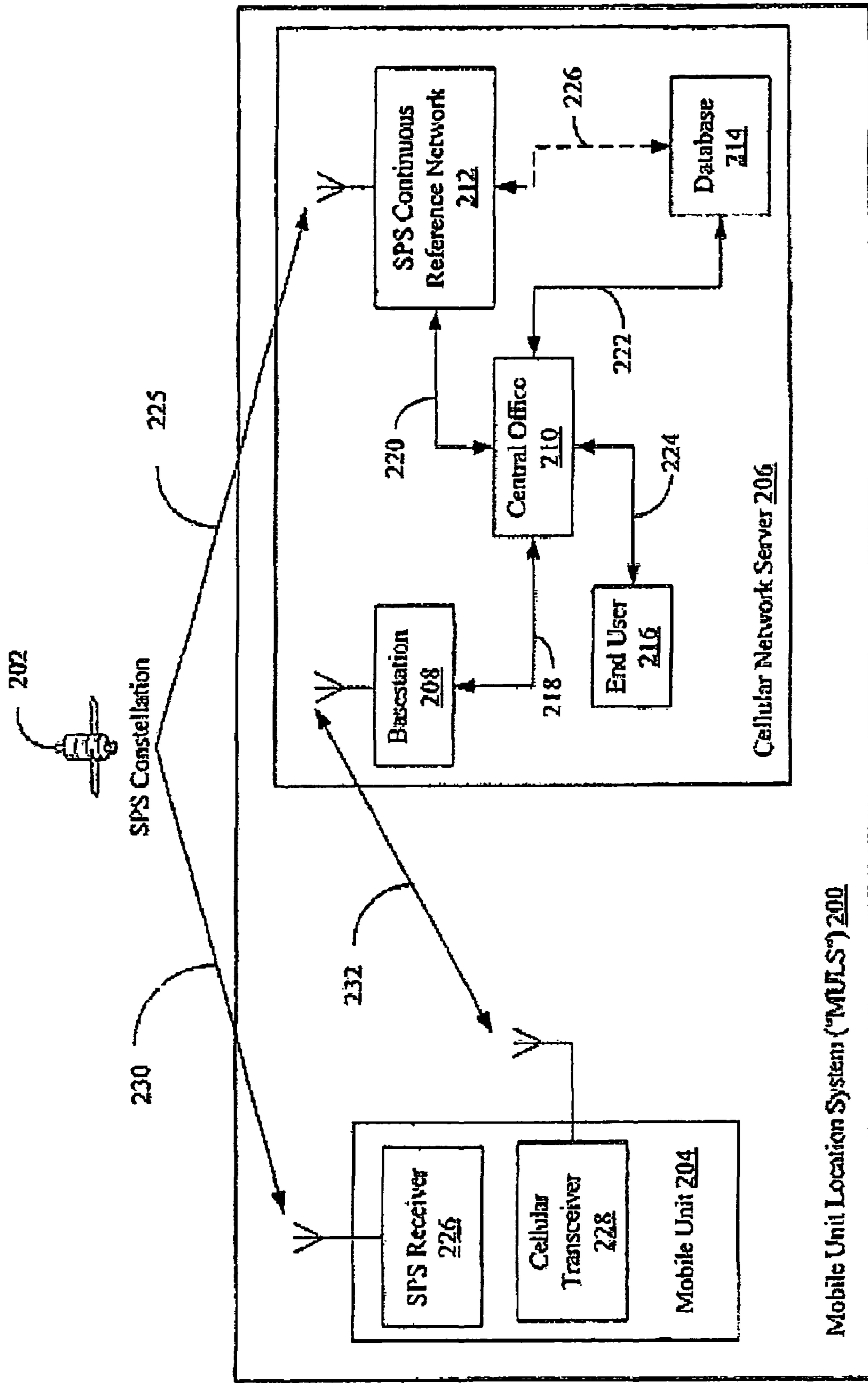


FIG. 2

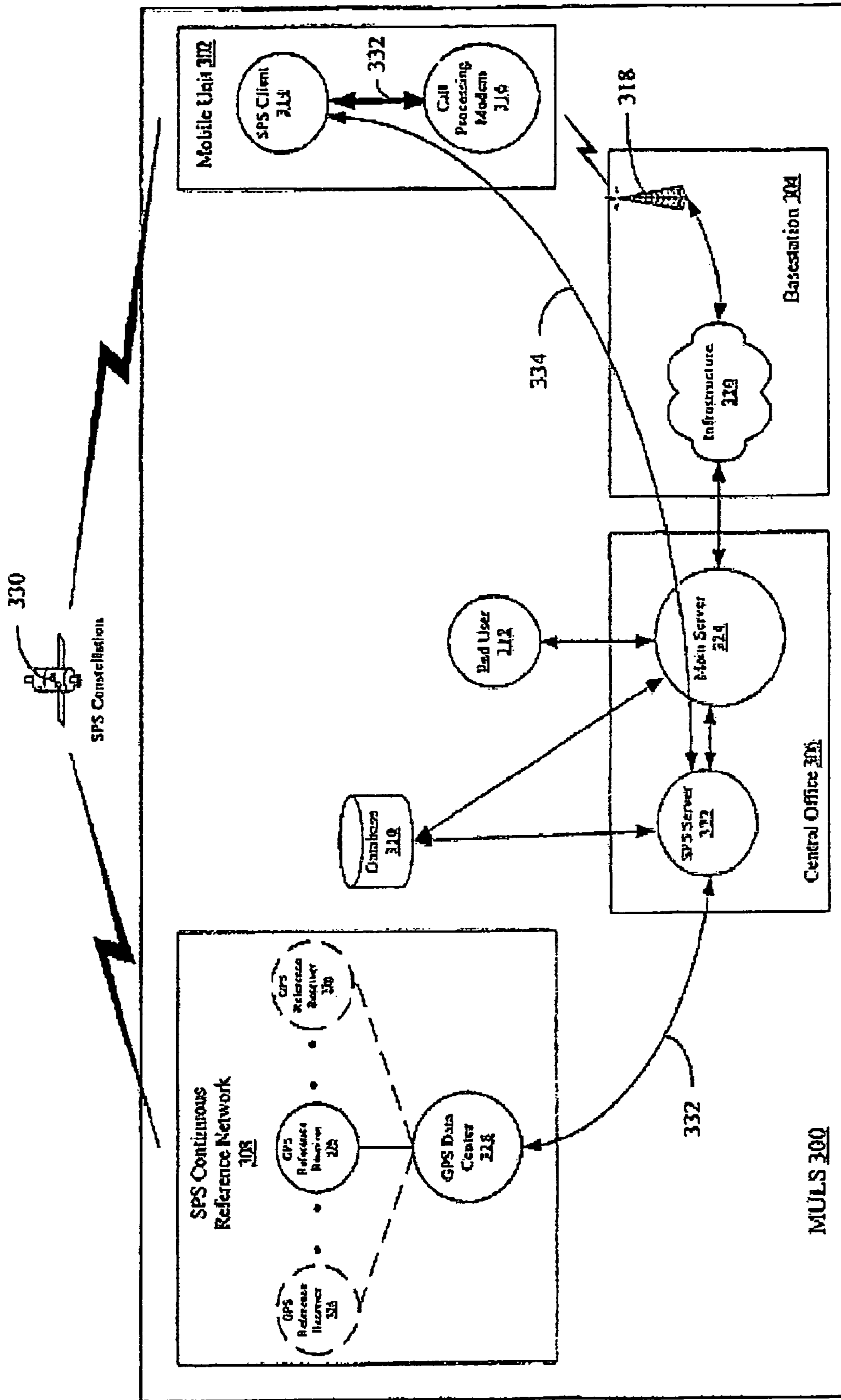


FIG. 3

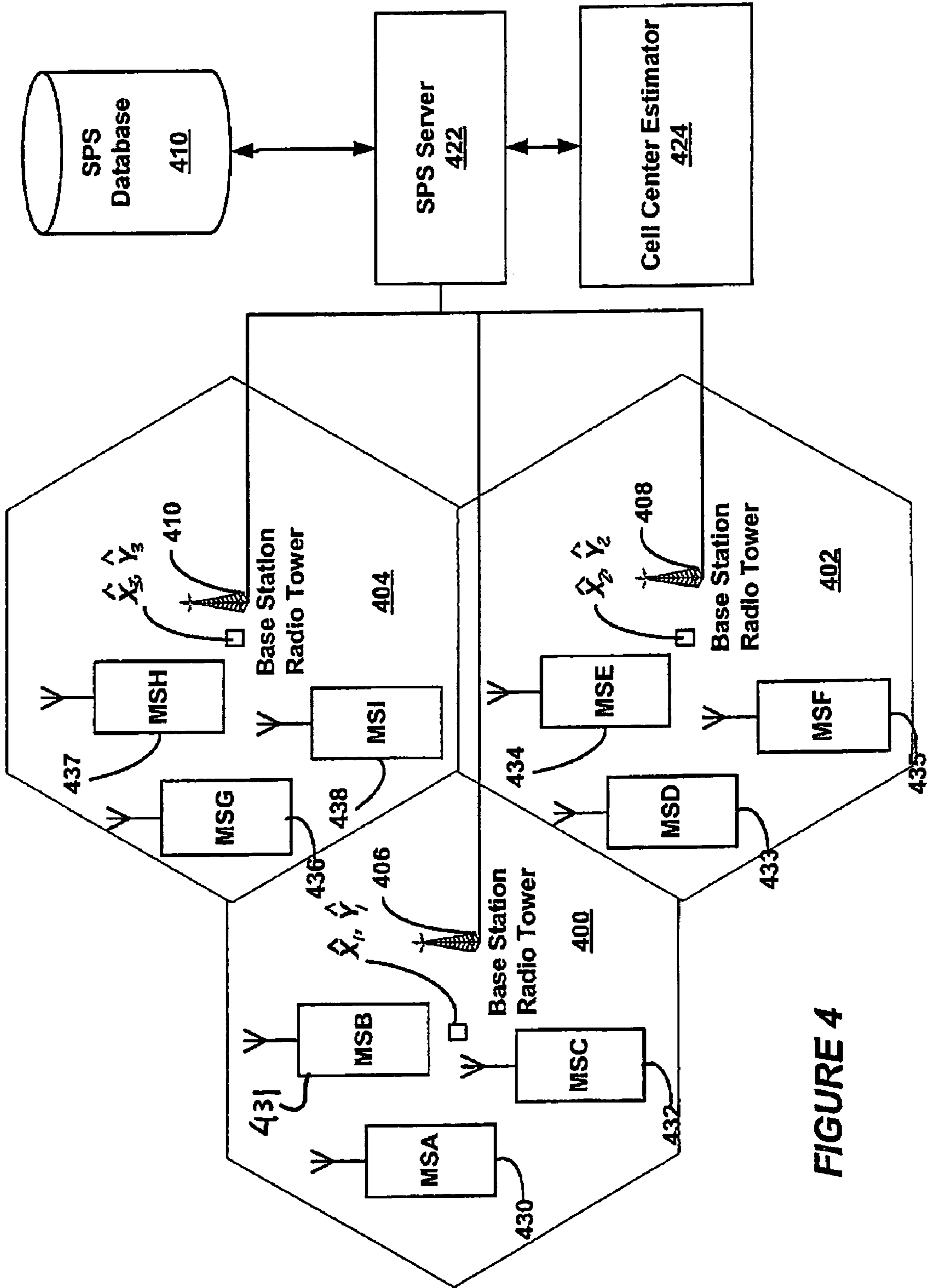


FIGURE 4

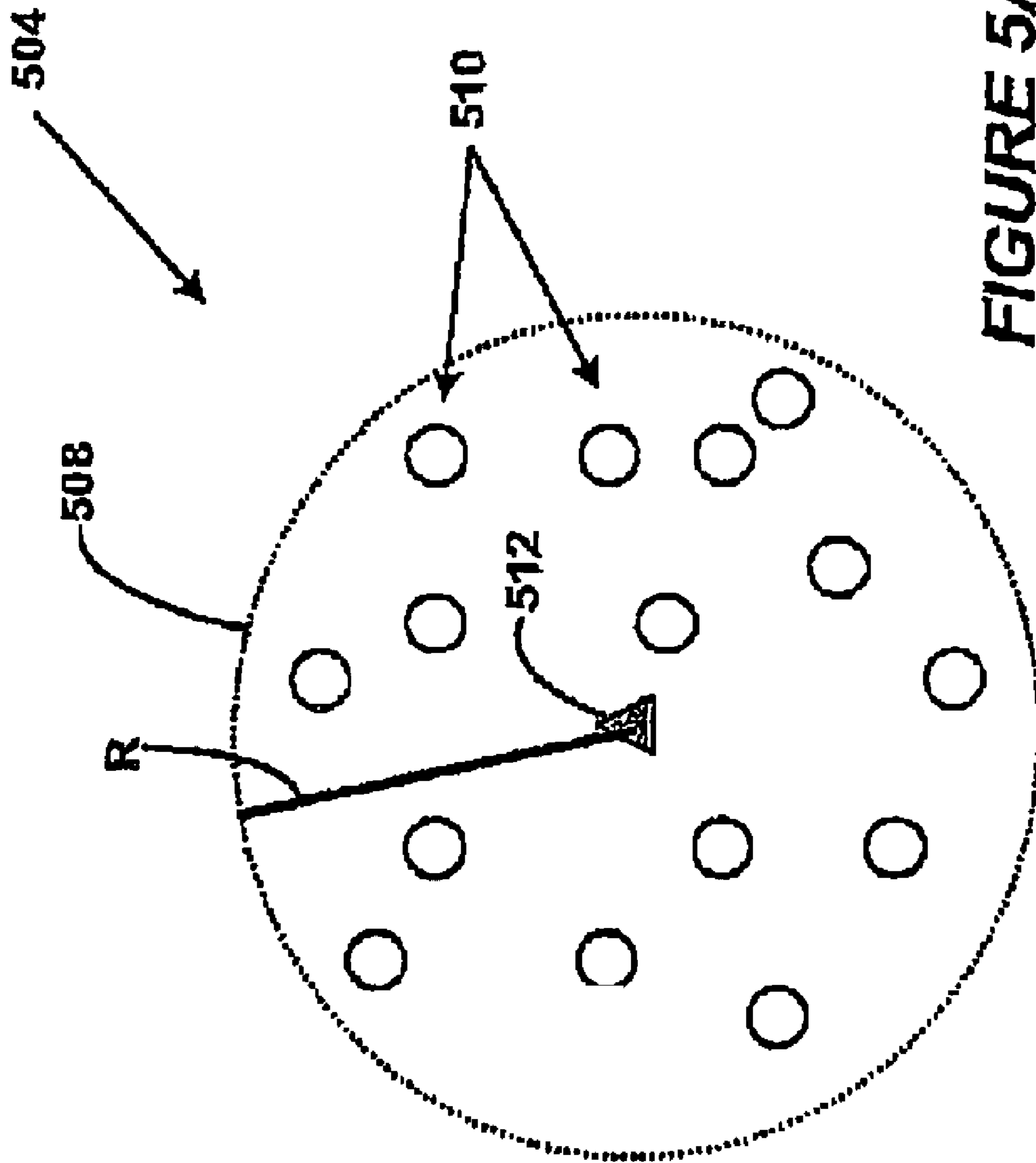


FIGURE 5A

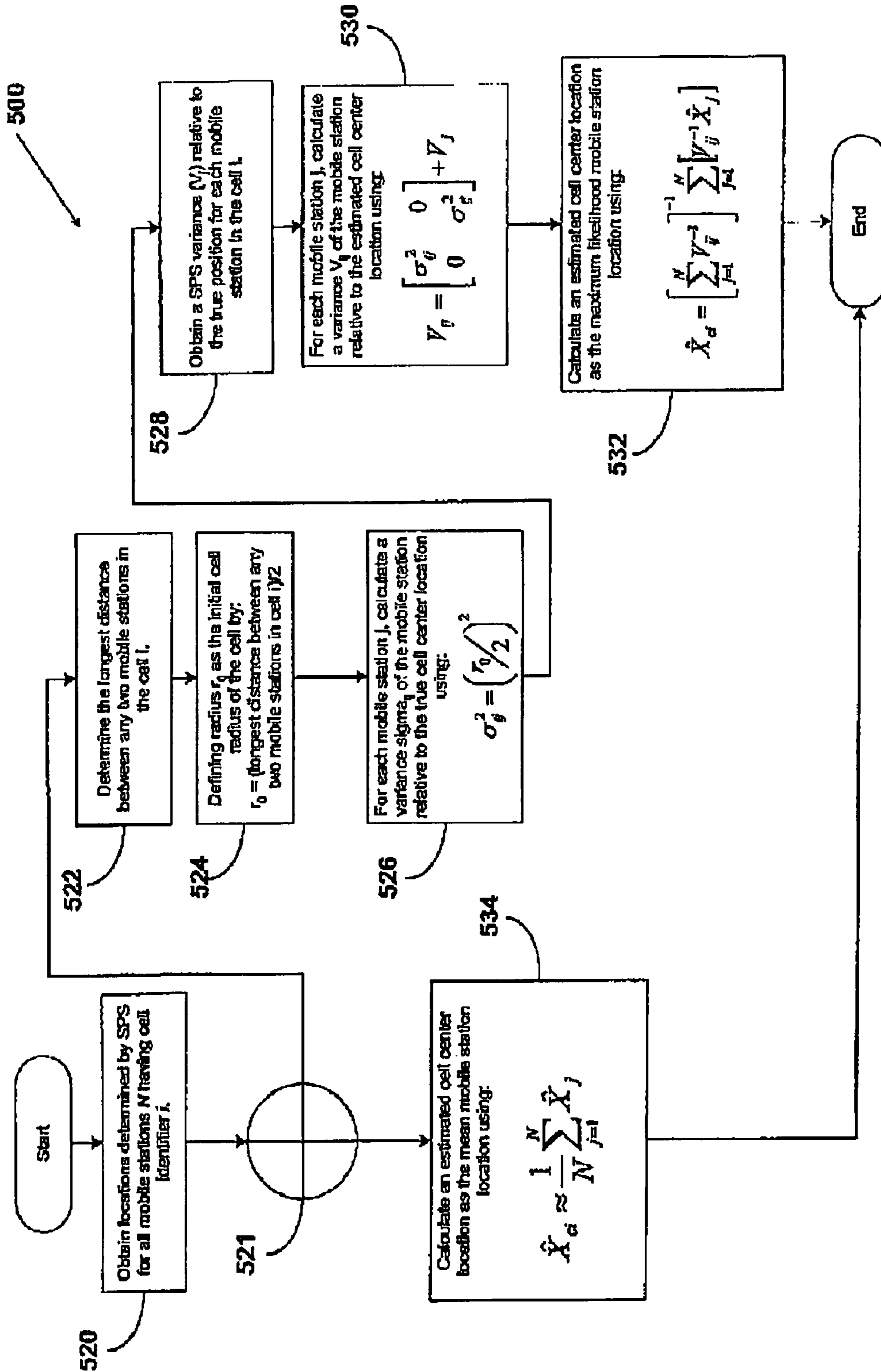


FIGURE 5B

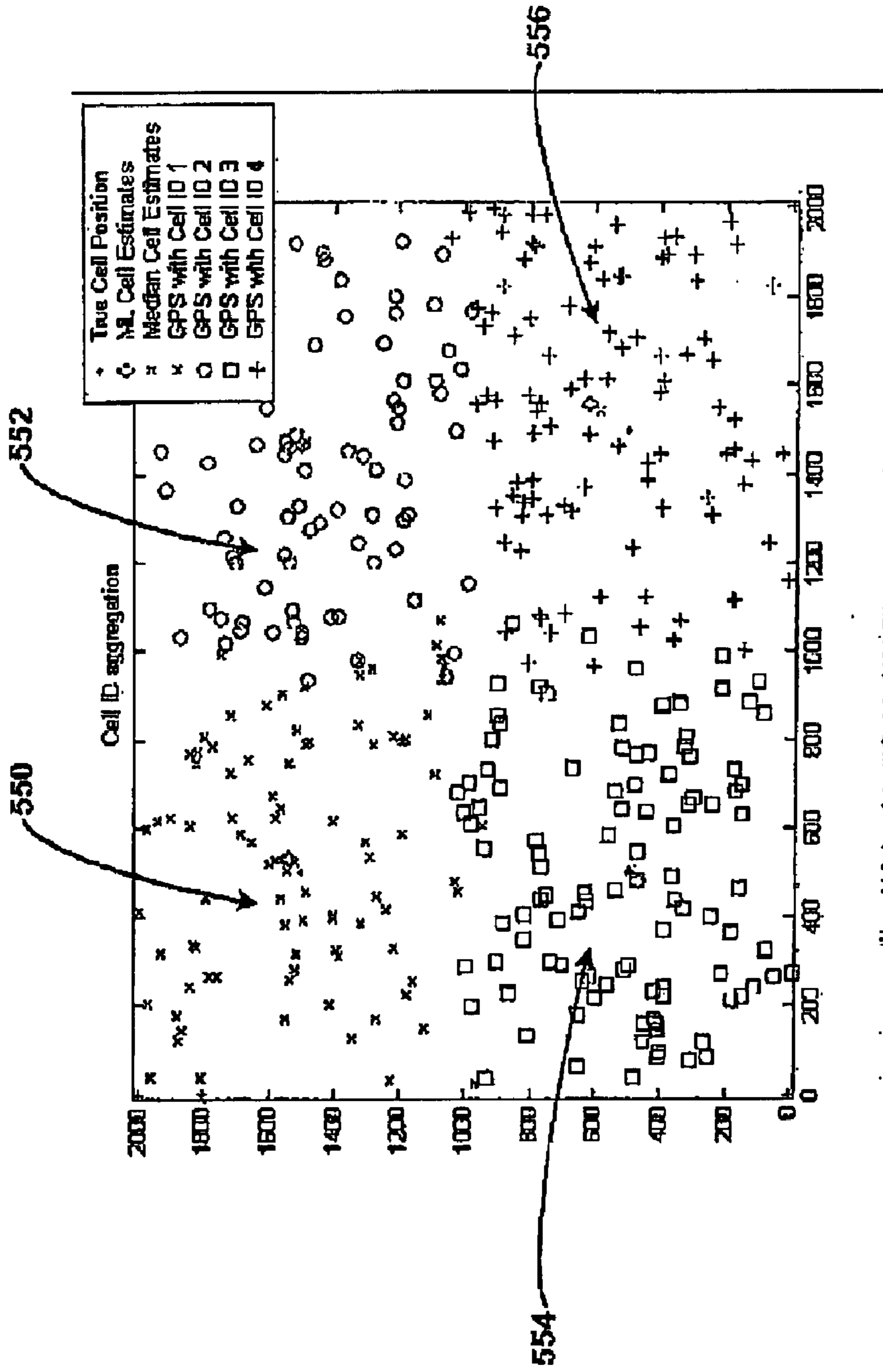


FIG. 5C

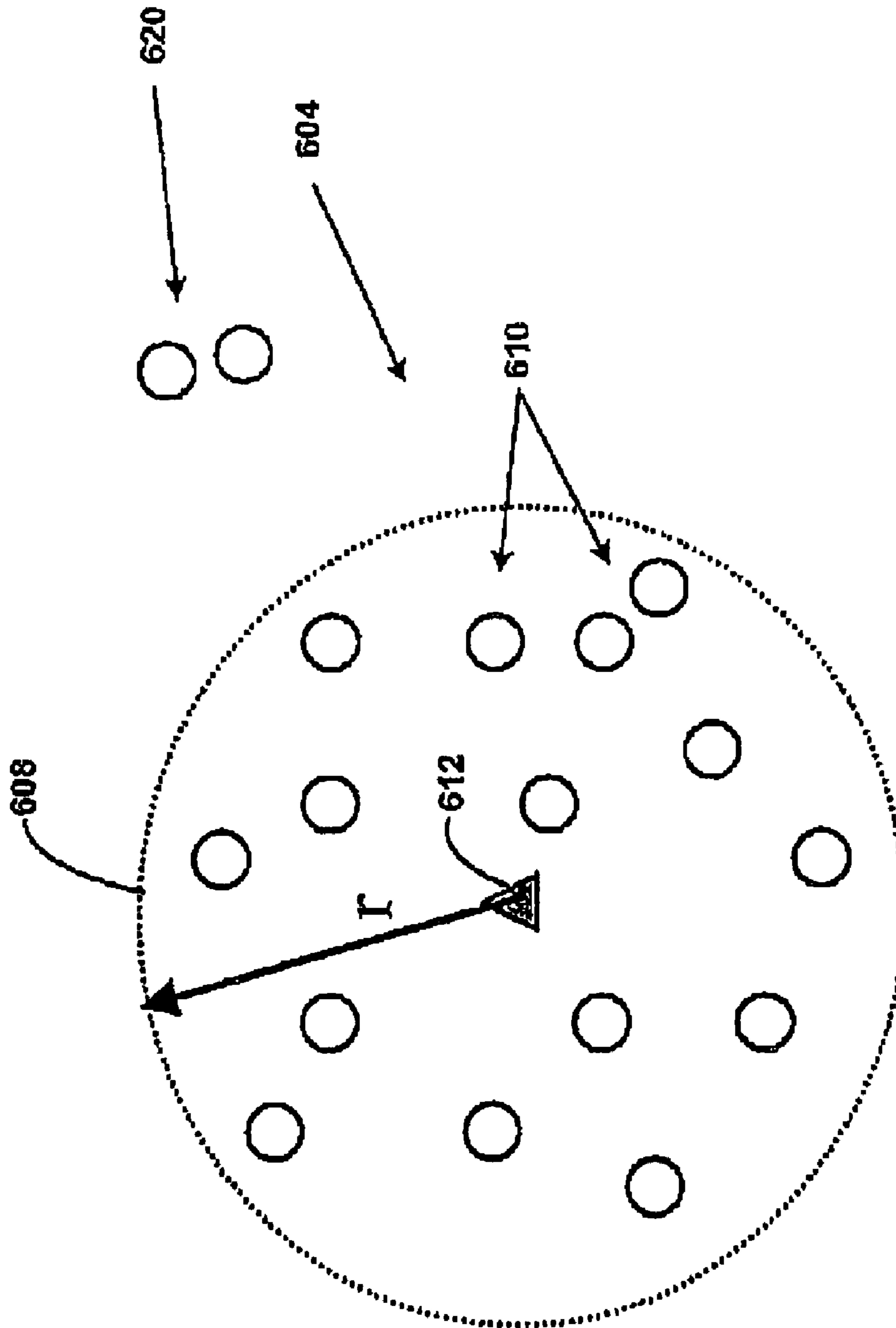


FIGURE 6A

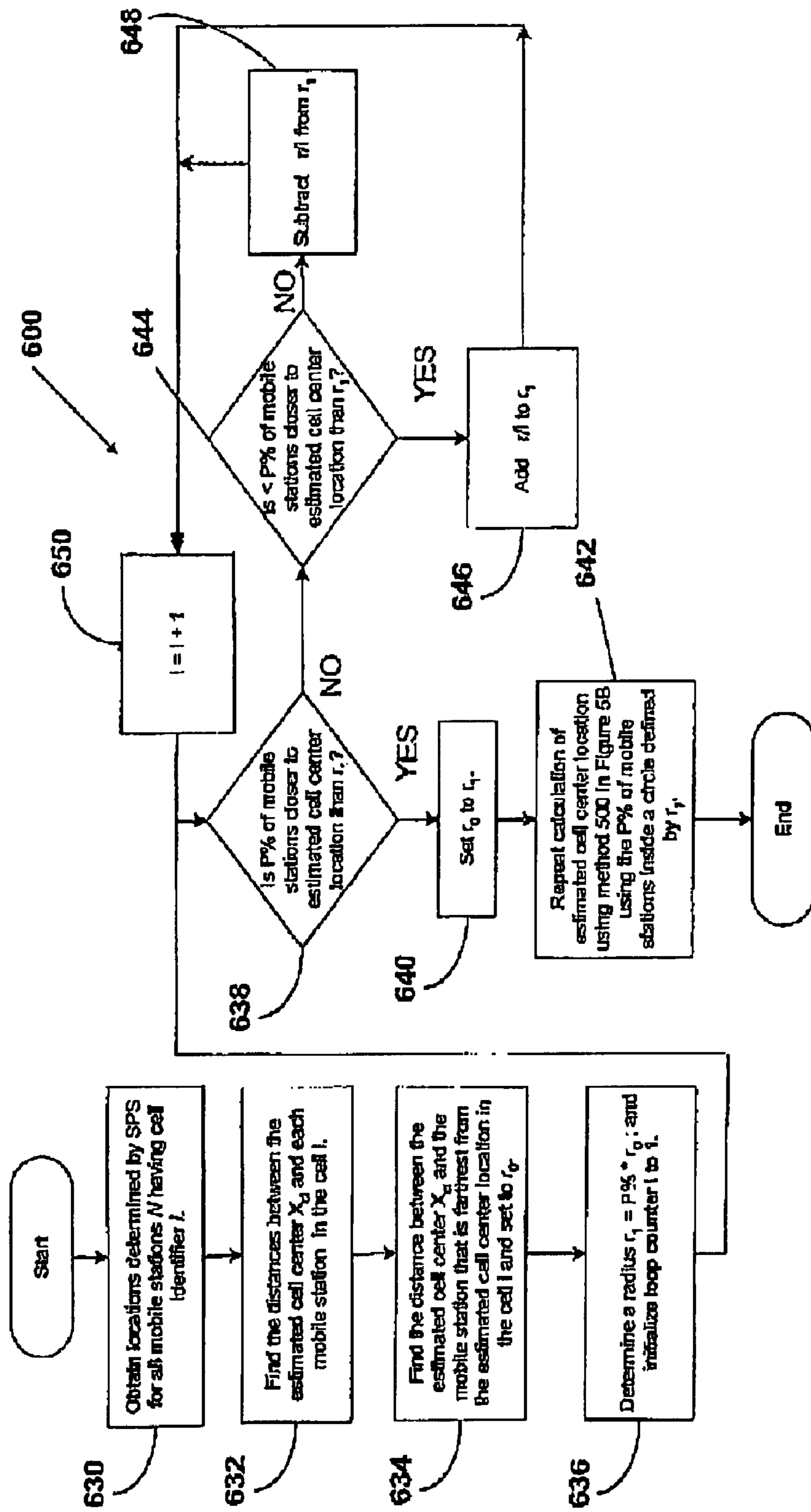


FIGURE 6B

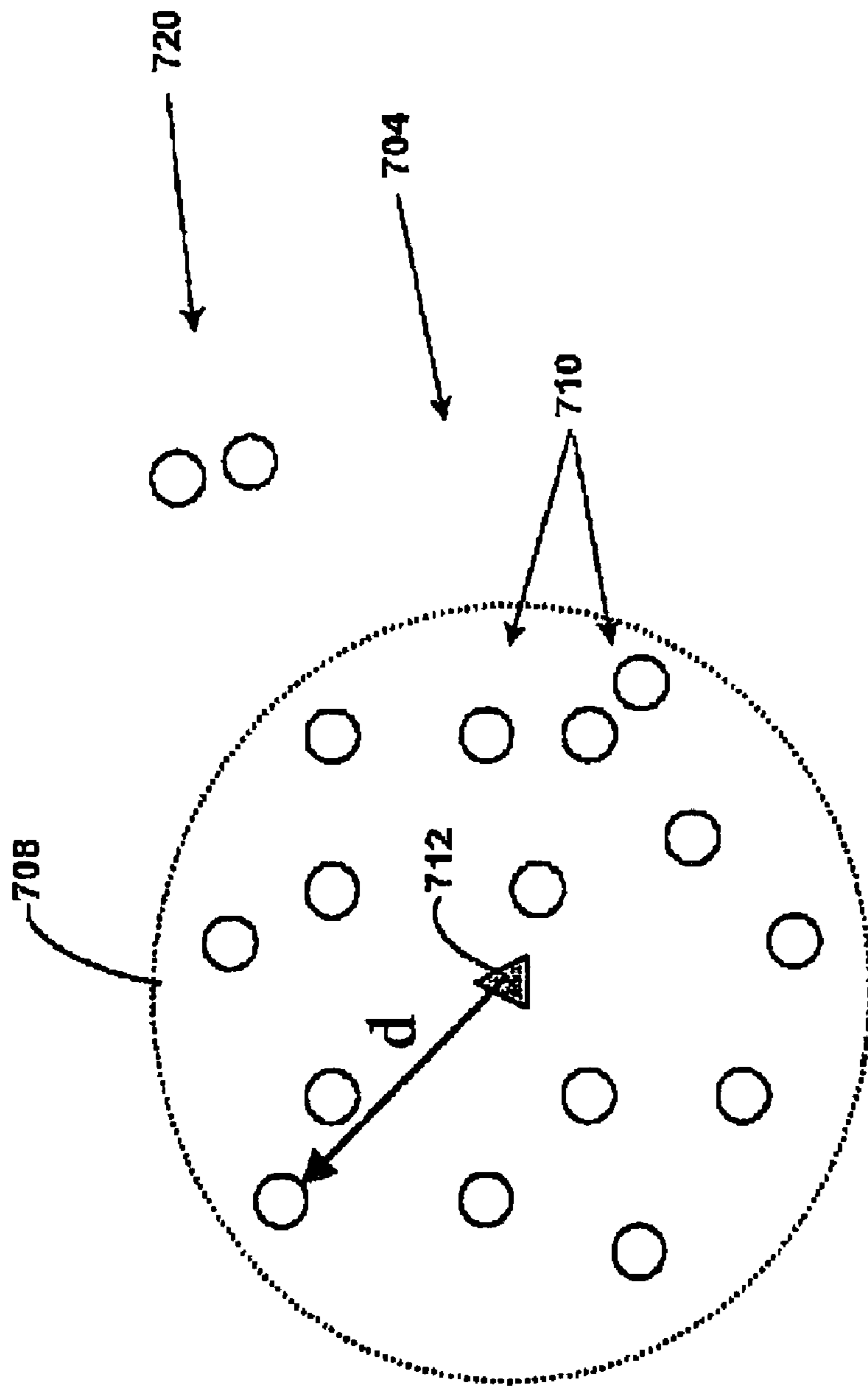


FIGURE 7A

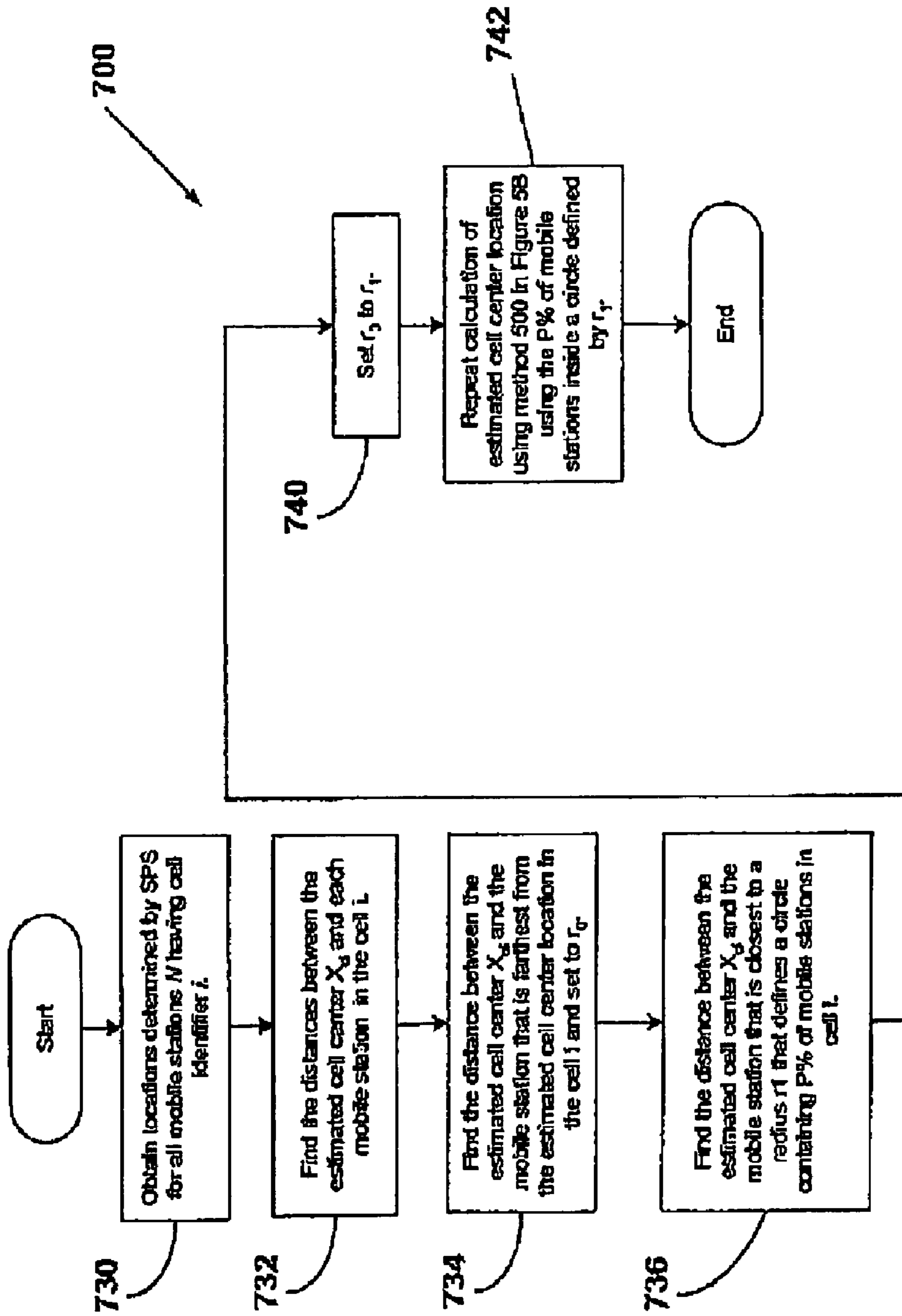


FIGURE 7B

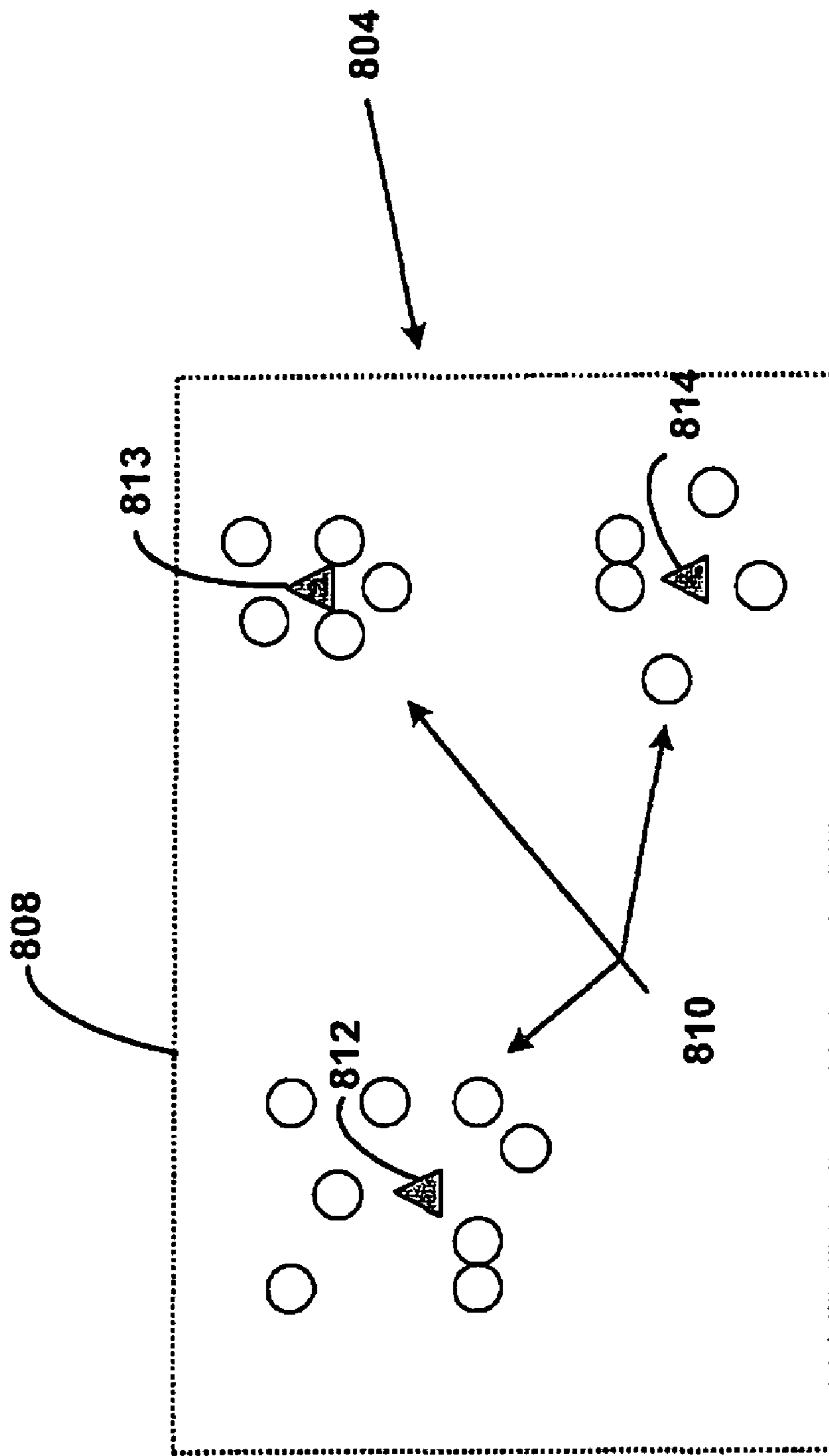


FIGURE 8

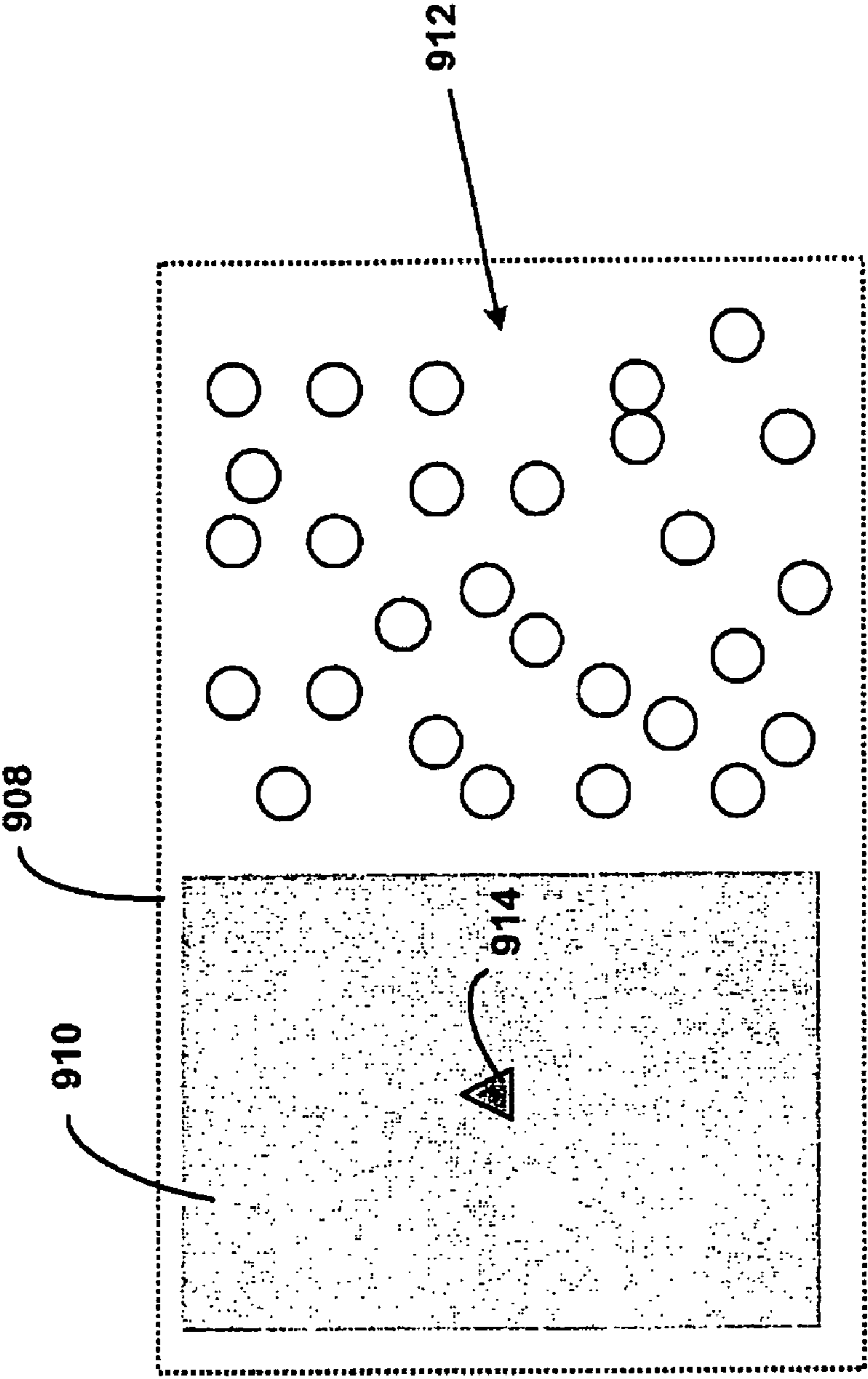


FIGURE 9

SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR ESTIMATING CELL CENTER POSITION FOR CELL ID BASED POSITIONING

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is a continuation-in-part of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/489,225, filed Sep. 10, 2002 now U.S. Pat. No. 7,672,675, titled "System of Utilizing Cell Information to Locate a Wireless Device," which claims priority under Section 119(e) to U.S. Provisional Application Ser. No. 60/318,806, filed Sep. 10, 2001, each of which are incorporated into this application by reference.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

This invention relates generally to positioning systems, and more particularly, to using wireless communications systems to provide aiding information to a positioning system.

2. Related Art

In densely built urban areas, the use of a positioning system such as a Satellite Positioning System (SPS)—for example, a Global Position System (GPS), also known as NAVSTAR—is often not available or reliable due to various reasons such as, for example, multipath, shadowing, and path loss. In many situations, however, a GPS receiver may be associated with a cell of a cellular communication network and the base station serving that particular cell. Accordingly, one method for mobile phone positioning is to use the cell area coverage information (Cell ID) of the caller as a coarse location estimate to obtain the approximate location of the caller. In urban areas, cell position accuracy may be as close as 100 meters, and therefore the center of a cell can be employed as the alternative position when GPS positioning has a larger error or is not available. The cell ID information is usually or always available and reliable, and is independent of GPS measurements, and can also be easily obtained by paging or updating. Thus, the center of a cell may be employed as an approximate location of a mobile communication device located within that cell.

While the location of the center of a cell may be available to mobile telephone companies, it is usually not available to GPS location providers. Therefore, there is a need for providing systems or methods for making estimated cell center locations available to GPS location providers.

SUMMARY

According to one aspect of the subject matter disclosed, systems and methods for estimating a cell center location provide the estimated cell center location as an approximate location for a SPS receiver in a mobile station. Example systems for estimating a cell center location in a SPS system may include a SPS server connected to the SPS system to retrieve a plurality of mobile station locations from mobile stations in a cell in a wireless communication system, each mobile station comprising an SPS receiver. A SPS database stores the plurality of mobile station locations and a cell identifier to identify the cell in which the mobile station is obtaining wireless communications service. A cell center location estimator calculates an estimated cell center location by obtaining N mobile station locations assumed to be uniformly distributed in a cell i and calculating a statistical measure of the mobile station locations, where the statistical

measure is either a maximum likelihood mobile station location or a mean mobile station location.

Other systems, methods, features and advantages of the invention will be or will become apparent to one with skill in the art upon examination of the following figures and detailed description. It is intended that all such additional systems, methods, features and advantages be included within this description, be within the scope of the invention, and be protected by the accompanying claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

The invention can be better understood by referring to the following figures. The components in the figures are not necessarily to scale, emphasis instead being placed upon illustrating the principles of the invention. In the figures, like reference numerals designate corresponding parts throughout the different views.

FIG. 1 is a block diagram of an example of a system for providing location-based services;

FIG. 2 is a block diagram of a portion of the system illustrated in FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is a block diagram of the system in FIG. 1 illustrating operation of a positioning system and a wireless communications system;

FIG. 4 is a block diagram of a portion of the system illustrated in FIG. 1 that implements examples of systems and methods for estimating a cell center in a wireless communication system;

FIG. 5A is a schematic diagram illustrating an example of a method for estimating a cell center;

FIG. 5B is a flowchart of an example of a method for estimating a cell center location;

FIG. 5C is an example of an X-Y graph showing locations of mobile stations in four example cells;

FIG. 6A is a schematic diagram illustrating another example of a method for increasing accuracy of an estimated cell center location;

FIG. 6B is a flowchart of another example of a method for estimating a cell center location;

FIG. 7A is a schematic diagram illustrating another example of a method for increasing accuracy of an estimated cell center location;

FIG. 7B is a flowchart of another example of a method for estimating a cell center location;

FIG. 8 is a schematic diagram illustrating another example of a method for estimating a cell center; and

FIG. 9 is a schematic diagram illustrating an example of another method for estimating a cell center.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

In the following description, reference is made to the accompanying drawings that form a part hereof, and in which is shown by way of illustration one or more specific exemplary embodiments in which the invention may be practiced. It is to be understood that other embodiments may be utilized and structural changes may be made without departing from the scope of this invention.

FIG. 1 is a graphical representation of three cell sites within a cluster of cells of a cellular telephone network (known as the "cellular network"). FIG. 1 illustrates a plurality of cells **100**, **102** and **104** in the cellular telephone network. Consistent with convention, each cell **100**, **102** and **104** is shown symbolically as having a hexagonal cell boundary. Within each

cell **100**, **102** and **104** are base stations **106**, **108** and **110** that are located near the center and/or centroid of the corresponding cell **100**, **102** and **104**. Specifically, the base station **106** is located within cell **100**, the base station **108** is located within cell **102**, and the base station **110** is located within cell **104**.

The boundaries **112**, **114** and **116** separating the cells **100**, **102** and **104** generally represent an area where handoff occurs between the cells **100**, **102** and **104**. As an example, when a wireless device **118** (also known as a “mobile unit” or “mobile station”) moves away from the base station **106** in the cell **100** towards an adjacent base station **108** in the adjacent cell **102**, the signal-to-interference plus noise ratio (“S/I+N”) from the base station **106** will drop below a predetermined threshold level while, at the same time, the S/I+N from the second base station **108** increases above this predetermined threshold as the wireless device **118** moves over the boundary **112** into the cell **102**. Cellular systems are designed to provide coverage from each base station within areas that roughly overlap at the boundaries **112**, **114** and **116**. In addition, wireless devices are designed to receive signals from various base stations and are capable of initiating a handoff if the signal level of one station is stronger than the one currently being used for communication.

Each cell **100**, **102** and **104** and its corresponding base station **106**, **108** and **110** is in signal communication with a cellular network server **120**, via signal paths **122**, **124** and **126**, respectively. The cellular network server **120** is generally a switching network server that may include telecommunication switches (not shown) and a central office (not shown). The cellular network server **120** controls the operation of the base stations **106**, **108** and **110** and may assign individual cellular identification values to the base stations **106**, **108** and **110** corresponding to the identification values for cells **100**, **102** and **104**.

These identification values may then be transmitted via a two-way channel or a broadcast channel to individual wireless devices (such as wireless device **118**) located in the cellular network and utilized for identifying the location of the wireless device **118** relative to a specific cell. As an example, when the base station **106** broadcasts a cellular identification value (also known as a “cellular tag” or “cell ID”) for cell **100**, wireless device **118** would receive the broadcast signal and respond to base station **106** identifying itself as wireless device **118** located within the coverage area of cell **100**. This identification may take place at any time when the wireless device **118** and base station **106** are communicating such as in the initial cellular handshake procedure or at a later time. Accordingly, after the wireless device **118** and base station **106** exchange this information, the wireless device **118** contains the cell ID and the base station **106** contains an identifier of the wireless device **118**.

As another example, when base stations **106**, **108**, **110** broadcast their cellular identification value (also known as a “cellular tag”) for the cells **100**, **102** and **104**, the wireless device **118** would receive the broadcast signals. These signals are sent through the base station **106** (through which it is communicating) identifying itself as wireless device **118** located within the coverage area of cell **100**. This identification may take place at any time when the wireless device **118** and base station **106** are communicating such as in the initial cellular handshake procedure or at a later time. During this exchange of information, the cellular network server **120** registers the wireless device **118** as being within cell **100** and communicating via base station **106**. The registration of the wireless device **118** may involve storing or linking the cell ID

of the base station **106** (and cell **100**) with the identifier of the wireless device **118** in a database within the cellular network. When the wireless device **118** moves into another cell, the cellular network would update its database to link the wireless device **118** to the cell ID of the cell it entered into. In examples of systems and methods for aiding positioning systems consistent with the present invention, the cellular identification values may advantageously be used as approximate location aids for the wireless device **118**.

FIG. 2 is a block diagram illustrating an example of an implementation of a mobile unit location system (“MULS”) **200**, which may receive SPS signals from a SPS constellation **202**. The MULS **200** may include a mobile unit (i.e., a wireless device) **204** and a cellular network server **206**. The cellular network server **206** may include a base station **208**, a central office **210**, an SPS continuous reference network **212**, a database **214**, and an end user **216**. The base station **208** may also be optionally independent of the cellular network server **206**. The central office **210** is in signal communication with the base station **208**, SPS continuous reference network **212**, database **214** and end user **216** via signal paths **218**, **220**, **222** and **224**, respectively. Additionally, the SPS continuous reference network **212** may be optionally in signal communication with the database **214** via optional signal path **226**.

The base station **208** is a fixed device that may include a cellular tower and the associated equipment with which the mobile unit **204** may communicate. The base station **208** communicates with a landline telephone network (whether private or public) such as the plain old telephone service (“POTS”). The central office **210** (also known as a “public exchange”) is generally a facility where lines of a subscriber are joined to switching equipment for connecting with other subscribers whether locally, or by long distance. The SPS continuous reference network **212** is a fixed device and associated equipment for receiving SPS signals from the SPS constellation **202** via signal path **225**. The database **214** may store location information of the mobile unit **204** with associated information of a cell. The associated information of a cell may include the cellular identification of the cell, as well as characteristic information of the cell measurable by a mobile unit in the cell such as signal strength, bit error rate (BER), propagation delay and/or multipath of the signal transmitted by the base station to the mobile unit within the cell, the number of fingers in a rake receiver and their relative delays and phases, and the like. In addition, in accordance with implementations described below, the database **214** may also include estimated parameters of one or more cells, such as the mass center and radius of a cell. Such parameters may be updated over time, and may be utilized for estimating the position of a mobile unit within the cell such as the mobile unit **204**. The end user **216** may be any end user such as a program, application, utility, subsystem or actual individual that desires the location information of the mobile unit **204** including a user of the mobile unit **204**.

The mobile unit **204** may include a SPS receiver **226** and a cellular transceiver **228**. The SPS receiver **226** receives SPS signals from the SPS constellation **202** via signal path **230** and the cellular transceiver **228** is in signal communication with the base station **208** via signal path **232**. Examples of the SPS receiver **226** include the SiRFstarI, SiRFstarII and SiRFstarIII GPS receivers produced by SiRF Technology, Inc. of San Jose, Calif., the GPSONe GPS receiver produced by Qualcomm Incorporated of San Diego, Calif., or any other GPS receiver capable of operation within the mobile unit **204**. The cellular transceiver **228** (also known as “call processing

function”) may be any radio frequency (“RF”), Amps, FDMA, TDMA, GSM, CDMA, W-CDMA, CDMA-2000 or UMTS type transceiver.

FIG. 3 is a block diagram illustrating a simplified example of an implementation of the MULS 300 in a typical cellular telephone environment. The MULS 300 includes a mobile unit 302, a base station 304, central office 306, SPS continuous reference network 308, database 310 and end user 312. The mobile unit 302 may include a SPS client 314 such as a SiRFLoc client and a call processing function 316 such as a RF, Amps, FDMA, TDMA, GSM, CDMA, W-CDMA, CDMA-2000 or UMTS type transceiver. The base station 304 includes the fixed device such as radio tower 318 and the associated infrastructure 320. The central office 306 includes an SPS server 322 such as SiRFLoc server and a central office server 324. As an example, the central office server 324 may include a Serving Mobile Location Center (SMLC)/Global Mobile Location Center (GMLC) as defined in the wireless location standard for GSM. The central office server 324 may include switching components and electronics for performing the wireless telecommunications functions of the central office 306. The SPS continuous reference network 308 includes a SPS reference receiver 326 and a SPS data center 328. The SPS continuous reference network 308 and the mobile unit 302 both receive SPS signals from the SPS constellation 330.

As an example of operation, the SPS continuous reference network 308 collects data, from the SPS constellation 330 in the system coverage area in real-time, and stores collected data locally in a memory unit (not shown) within the SPS continuous reference network 308. Based on the coverage area, multiple reference receivers 326 may be used in the system. Periodically, the SPS server 322 polls, via signal path 332, the data from the SPS continuous reference network 308 related to the SPS client 314, and caches it in its internal memory unit (not shown) in the SPS server 322, so that it may be reused for another SPS client (not shown) without polling it again if it is relevant to subsequent SPS clients (not shown). This information is then transmitted to the SPS client 314 via signal path 334, which is the signal path through the central office 306, base station 304 and call processing function 316.

It is appreciated that the combining of cellular identification information with the mobile unit 302 location may take place either within the SPS subsystem (i.e., the SPS client) 314 or within the call processing function 316 or even in the SPS server 322. In the one example, the cellular identification information is transferred from the call processing function 316 to the SPS client 314 and tagged to the computed position (i.e., latitude, longitude and altitude data). In another example, the location from the SPS client 314 is sent to the call processing function 316 where it is tagged to the cellular identification information. This tagged data is then sent as a message, over the wireless network, to database 310 where it is stored. In a third example, the location from the SPS client 314 and the cellular identification information are received as different messages from the same SPS client 314 during the same geolocation session, and associated together at the SPS server 322.

The MULS 300 advantageously provides the mobile unit 302 with additional surrounding information (i.e., an approximate location aid) from the database 310. As a result of providing this approximate location aid, a SPS receiver may be jump-started to provide position information for the mobile unit 302 more quickly. Knowing the approximate location of the mobile unit 302 also helps the mobile unit 302 expedite its location calculations.

Three general situations may apply to a given mobile unit located in a given cell when the mobile unit or a remote party desires to know the position of the mobile unit. First, the GPS location of the mobile unit may be available due to, for example, the proper functioning of the GPS components embedded with the mobile unit. In this case, the mobile unit does not require positioning assistance. Second, GPS location information may be available, but is determined to be unreliable due to inaccuracy or uncertainty. In this case, the mobile unit may require position assistance information if the position assistance information available at the time is determined to be more reliable than the GPS location information. Third, the GPS location of the mobile unit may be not available at all due to, for example, a failure of the GPS components embedded with the mobile unit. In this case, the mobile unit requires position assistance information to calculate its position. In the implementations described by way of example below and illustrated in the drawings, position assistance information may include the estimated center of the cell in which the mobile unit is located. The actual location of the center of a cell is not needed to provide cell ID based positioning. Likewise, the actual location of the base station is not needed. As previously noted the base station may not be located at the center of the cell and thus is not necessarily the best estimate of the location of a mobile device within the cell. Thus, the implementations described and illustrated below are operative in situations where the location of the cell center is not available.

FIG. 4 is a schematic diagram illustrating use of systems and methods for estimating cell center locations to acquire coarse location estimates to an SPS receiver that is unable to obtain its position with suitable accuracy and precision, or is attempting to locate itself on startup. The diagram in FIG. 4 shows three adjacent cells, a first cell 400, a second cell 402, and a third cell 404. Each cell is serviced by a first base station 406 in the first cell 400, a second base station 408 in the second cell 402, and a third base station 410 in the third cell 404.

The base stations 406, 408, 410 provide service to the mobile stations in their respective cells. The first base station 406 provides service to mobile stations MSA 430, MSB 431, and MSC 432 in cell 400. The second base station 408 provides service to mobile stations MSD 433, MSE 434, and MSF 435 in cell 402. The third base station 410 provides service to mobile stations MSG 436, MSH 437, and MSI 438 in cell 404. Each base station 406, 408, 410 may be connected via a variety of signal paths and combinations of signal paths (some of which are described above with reference to FIGS. 1-3) to a SPS server 422. The SPS server 422 includes an interface to a SPS database 410 and an interface to a cell center estimator 424. The SPS server 422 may receive location information and cell ID information from the mobile stations in the cells as described above with reference to FIGS. 1-3. The SPS database 410 may receive and store the location information including cell ID information for each mobile station in each cell. The location and cell ID information in the SPS database 410 may be accessed and used by a cell center estimating function to estimate the location of the center of the cell.

In examples of systems and methods for estimating cell center locations, the SPS database 410 may include data for each mobile station in each cell serviced by the SPS server 322. Table 1 shows examples of the data that may be included in the SPS database 410.

TABLE 1

Mobile Station Id	Mobile Station Position	Horizontal Variance (V_j)	Cell Identifier	Estimated Cell Center Location	Cell Radius
MSA	x_0, y_0	$\begin{bmatrix} \sigma_{N,0}^2 & \sigma_{NE,0}^2 \\ \sigma_{NE,0}^2 & \sigma_{E,0}^2 \end{bmatrix}_{j=0}$	C_1	\hat{X}_1, \hat{Y}_1	R1
MSB	x_1, y_1	$\begin{bmatrix} \sigma_{N,1}^2 & \sigma_{NE,1}^2 \\ \sigma_{NE,1}^2 & \sigma_{E,1}^2 \end{bmatrix}_{j=1}$	C_1	\hat{X}_1, \hat{Y}_1	R1
MSC	x_2, y_2	$\begin{bmatrix} \sigma_{N,2}^2 & \sigma_{NE,2}^2 \\ \sigma_{NE,2}^2 & \sigma_{E,2}^2 \end{bmatrix}_{j=2}$	C_1	\hat{X}_1, \hat{Y}_1	R1
MSD	x_3, y_3	$\begin{bmatrix} \sigma_{N,3}^2 & \sigma_{NE,3}^2 \\ \sigma_{NE,3}^2 & \sigma_{E,3}^2 \end{bmatrix}_{j=3}$	C_2	\hat{X}_2, \hat{Y}_2	R2
MSE	x_4, y_4	$\begin{bmatrix} \sigma_{N,4}^2 & \sigma_{NE,4}^2 \\ \sigma_{NE,4}^2 & \sigma_{E,4}^2 \end{bmatrix}_{j=4}$	C_2	\hat{X}_2, \hat{Y}_2	R2
MSF	x_5, y_5	$\begin{bmatrix} \sigma_{N,5}^2 & \sigma_{NE,5}^2 \\ \sigma_{NE,5}^2 & \sigma_{E,5}^2 \end{bmatrix}_{j=5}$	C_2	\hat{X}_2, \hat{Y}_2	R2
MSG	x_6, y_6	$\begin{bmatrix} \sigma_{N,6}^2 & \sigma_{NE,6}^2 \\ \sigma_{NE,6}^2 & \sigma_{E,6}^2 \end{bmatrix}_{j=6}$	C_3	\hat{X}_3, \hat{Y}_3	R3
MSH	x_7, y_7	$\begin{bmatrix} \sigma_{N,7}^2 & \sigma_{NE,7}^2 \\ \sigma_{NE,7}^2 & \sigma_{E,7}^2 \end{bmatrix}_{j=7}$	C_3	\hat{X}_3, \hat{Y}_3	R3
MSI	x_8, y_8	$\begin{bmatrix} \sigma_{N,8}^2 & \sigma_{NE,8}^2 \\ \sigma_{NE,8}^2 & \sigma_{E,8}^2 \end{bmatrix}_{j=8}$	C_3	\hat{X}_3, \hat{Y}_3	R3

In Table 1, the Mobile Station Id may be any suitable identifier that uniquely identifies the mobile stations in each cell. The Mobile Station Id is shown symbolically as MSA, MSB, MSC, MSD, MSE, MSF, MSG, MSH, and MSI in Table 1. Actual Id's may include the mobile station cellular telephone number assigned to each mobile station, an IP address, or any other suitable identifier. The mobile station position in Table 1 includes latest positions calculated for each mobile station. Each mobile station shown in Table 1 includes a SPS client and operates in the positioning system as described above. During operation, the mobile station position is periodically updated by the SPS positioning system.

The SPS positioning system may also calculate a horizontal variance V_j for the mobile station (j). The horizontal variance V_j is the variance of the location of the mobile station j in a flat, two-dimensional (x,y) space defining the area of the cell relative to its true position. The horizontal variance may be calculated as a 2x2 symmetrical matrix including an SPS positioning variance along the north axis (i.e. σ_N^2), an SPS positioning variance along the east axis (i.e. σ_E^2), and a variance relative to both axes (i.e. σ_{NE}^2). The SPS positioning variances, σ_N^2 , σ_E^2 , σ_{NE}^2 , are determined during acquisition of a location by the mobile stations and available when the mobile station locations become available.

Table 1 also includes a cell identifier, which may be a unique number, alphanumeric sequence, or other suitable symbol or token for identifying the cell. The Cell identifier may be provided by the wireless telecommunications system as described above.

Also as shown in Table 1, the database may include an estimated cell center location. The estimated cell center location is a calculated estimate of the cell center location, which is a center of the area serviced by the cell. The estimated cell center location may not be the exact true center of the service area of the cell; it may only be an approximation sufficiently accurate for use as an estimated location for a mobile station in the cell. In systems and methods for estimating the cell center location, the cell center estimator 424 uses the locations of mobile stations (as determined by the SPS positioning system) serviced by the cell to estimate the center of the cell as described below. The cell center estimator 424 may obtain the mobile station location from a database such as the SPS database 410.

The cell radius in Table 1 may be periodically calculated and/or updated each time an estimated cell location is determined. The cell radius may be calculated as one step in determining the estimated cell center location. The calculated cell radius may then be used as described below to determine a more accurate estimated cell location, which may be used to update the cell radius. The cell radius may be initially calculated without a starting cell center location by starting with the positions of all of the mobile stations in the cell and mapping an area covered by the mobile stations at the locations. A circle may be defined around the area that includes all of the mobile stations. The shape of the cell 504 is of no real significance. The actual shape of a cell is actually defined by the outward distances to which a cell is able to provide service

to a mobile station. Cells may actually overlap in coverage. The cell shape is defined as circular as a first step in the process. An initial circle radius may be defined as a distance just greater than half of the largest distance between any two mobile stations.

During operation, the mobile station may not be able to obtain a position, whether not at all, or with a desired accuracy. Also, if the mobile station is turned off, or its positioning capability is disabled, the mobile station position in the database may not be accurate when the mobile station is re-initialized. Such a mobile station may take the last estimated cell center location and use it as its own location.

In FIG. 4, the cell center location for cell 1 is \hat{X}_1, \hat{Y}_1 , the cell center location for cell 2 is \hat{X}_2, \hat{Y}_2 , and the cell center location for cell 3 is \hat{X}_3, \hat{Y}_3 . As described graphically in FIG. 4, the cell center locations do not coincide with the base stations. The following describes systems and methods for estimating a cell center location to set as the cell location, which may be used by a mobile station served by the cell as its location when the mobile station is unable to obtain its own location, or is initializing its positioning capabilities. As described below, the estimated cell center location is a derived location calculated from statistical measures of the mobile station locations in the cell. The statistical measures are based on assumptions about the distribution of the mobile stations in the cell. In one example below, the statistical measure selected for estimating a cell center location is a maximum likelihood mobile station location based on a Gaussian distribution for mobile station locations with a large variance. In another example, the mean of the mobile station locations is selected as the statistical measure. Those of ordinary skill in the art will appreciate that other measures may be used.

An example cell 504 is illustrated in FIG. 5A as a circle. For purposes of estimating a cell center position, a function (such as the cell center estimator 424 in FIG. 4) may obtain mobile station location data in a cell from a database such as the SPS database 410 in FIG. 4. The data for each mobile station served by a target cell (i.e. cell 504) may be retrieved and modeled as a circle as shown in FIG. 5 in which the perimeter of the circle is a cell border 508, the center of the circle is an estimated cell center (or cell location) 512, and the small circles inside the cell border 508 are mobile stations 510 served by the cell contained in the cell border 508, where each mobile station 510 is also an SPS receiver. The radius R in FIG. 5 is the initial cell radius calculated as described above. The mobile stations 510 are assumed to be uniformly distributed within the cell border 508. Thus, the SPS position estimate for each mobile station is assumed to be a Gaussian distribution with the true position being the mean with a variance V_j .

In accordance with the notation below, j is a mobile station (i.e. SPS receiver) and i identifies a cell. The initial radius of the cell is r_0 in the equations below. The positions of the SPS receivers are defined as x, y coordinates along north and east axes. The variance V_{ij} of the true position of a SPS receiver relative to an estimated cell center may be calculated as follows.

$$V_{ij} = \begin{bmatrix} \sigma_{ij}^2 & 0 \\ 0 & \sigma_{ij}^2 \end{bmatrix} + V_j \quad (1)$$

The value σ_{ij}^2 is the variance of the SPS receiver's true position relative to the true cell center. The value σ_{ij}^2 may be

determined in a variety of ways. The true value of σ_{ij}^2 in a given cell may be assumed to be relatively large since very little is known about the true position of the cell center. In one example, σ_{ij}^2 may be defined to be $\sigma_{ij}^2 = (r_0/2)^2$. The variance V_j is a 2×2 matrix that may be retrieved from the database (an example of which is shown in Table 1). The equation for V_{ij} then becomes:

$$V_{ij} = \begin{bmatrix} (r_{0ij}/2)^2 & 0 \\ 0 & (r_{0ij}/2)^2 \end{bmatrix} + V_j \quad (2)$$

Based on Eq. (2), the estimated cell center location X_{ci} may be determined to be the maximum likelihood location according to:

$$\hat{X}_{ci} = \left[\sum_{j=1}^N V_{ij}^{-1} \right]^{-1} \sum_{j=1}^N V_{ij}^{-1} \hat{X}_j \quad (3)$$

where \hat{X}_j is the true position of each mobile station j, assumed to be the position calculated by the SPS positioning system.

Equations (2) and (3) may be re-written to provide an approximate accuracy for the estimate of the position based on a certain number of SPS receivers, or to calculate the number of SPS receivers needed to achieve a certain accuracy of the cell location estimate (which is also the coarse location accuracy when SPS signal is not available).

If $\sigma_{ij}^2 \gg \sigma_N^2$ and $\sigma_{ij}^2 \gg \sigma_E^2$,

$$V_{ij} = \begin{bmatrix} \sigma_{ij}^2 & 0 \\ 0 & \sigma_{ij}^2 \end{bmatrix} + V_j \approx \begin{bmatrix} \sigma_{ij}^2 & 0 \\ 0 & \sigma_{ij}^2 \end{bmatrix} \quad (4)$$

Then, the cell location can be approximated using the mean mobile station location and sample variance as:

$$\hat{X}_{ci} \approx \frac{1}{N} \sum_{j=1}^N \hat{X}_j \quad (5)$$

$$\text{var}(\hat{X}_{ci}) \approx \frac{1}{N} \begin{bmatrix} \sigma_{ij}^2 & 0 \\ 0 & \sigma_{ij}^2 \end{bmatrix} \quad (6)$$

The variance in one axis given the assumption above for Equation (4) is:

$$\sigma_{ci}^2 \approx \frac{1}{N} \sigma_{ij}^2 \quad (7)$$

or

$$\sigma_{ci} \approx \frac{\sigma_{ij}}{\sqrt{N}} \quad (8)$$

The number of mobile stations needed in a cell to estimate the cell center to a desired accuracy may be determined using:

$$N \approx \left(\frac{\sigma_{ij}}{\sigma_{ci}} \right)^2 \quad (9)$$

The equations (1)-(5) above may be implemented in hardware/software functions. For example, the cell center estimator **424** that may operate in the SPS server **422** as shown in FIG. **4**, for example. The cell center estimator **424** may operate as part of the SPS server **422** or in communication with the SPS server **422**. The cell center estimator **424** may operate periodically to keep the estimated cell center location updated as the number of GPS receivers increases or decreases within the cell. In one example, the cell center estimate is updated along with an approximation of the accuracy of the estimate. The estimated location may then be updated when the approximate accuracy increases beyond the previously calculated accuracy.

FIG. **5B** is a flowchart of an example of a method **500** for determining an estimated cell center location. The method **500** in FIG. **5B** may be performed in software by a function such as the cell center estimator **424** with access to an SPS database with a structure similar to that shown in Table 1. In the method **500**, the locations of each of N mobile stations in the cell of interest (i) as determined by the SPS positioning system are accessed as shown in step **520**. The mobile station locations may be accessed from a database, such as the SPS database **410** described above with reference to FIG. **4**. FIG. **5B** includes an OR function block **521** indicating that the method may proceed in one of two ways. The method may continue from Step **520** to Step **522** or from Step **520** to Step **534**. Examples of the method **500** in FIG. **5B** may include both paths, or one or the other. If the method **500** proceeds to Step **522**, the longest distance between any two mobile stations is determined in Step **522**. The longest distance may be determined by calculating the distance between all of the mobile stations and selecting the largest distance. The two mobile stations that are farthest from each other may be assumed to be at opposite edges of the cell. In step **524**, an initial cell radius is defined as half the distance between the two mobile stations that are farthest from each other. In step **526**, the initial radius of the cell is used to calculate the value σ_{ij}^2 , which is the variance of the SPS receiver's true position relative to the true cell center. This value is determined for each mobile station in the cell. In step **528**, the SPS variance relative to the true position for each mobile station in the cell (V_j) may be retrieved from the database. At step **530**, the variance V_{ij} of the mobile station relative to the estimated cell center location is calculated using, for example, equation (2) above for each mobile station. In step **532**, the variance V_{ij} for each mobile station, and the location of each mobile station (\hat{X}_j) are used to calculate the estimated cell center location using equation (3) above, which calculates the maximum likelihood mobile station location in the cell.

If at OR function block **521** the method **500** proceeds to step **534**, then the mobile station locations obtained in Step **520** are used to calculate a mean mobile station location according to Equation (5) above. Additional steps may be performed to determine the accuracy given the number of mobile station locations used, or to determine the number of mobile stations required to obtain a desired accuracy as described above in Equations (8) and (9).

The estimate of the cell center location may be made more accurate by filtering the mobile station locations used in esti-

imating the cell center location to exclude mobile station locations that may not fit with the assumption that the mobile stations are uniformly distributed. FIG. **6A** shows one example of a mobile station location filter in which a cell **604** is again illustrated as a circle **608** having a radius 'r' (which may be r_0) and containing mobile stations **610** served by the cell. An initial cell center estimate **612** at the center of the circle **608** may be determined using examples of methods described above with reference to FIGS. **5A** & **5B**. In an example of a method for increasing the accuracy of the cell center estimate, a more accurate cell center estimate may be determined by redefining the circle **608** with a minimum radius 'r' that would encircle a certain percentage of the mobile stations **610** served by the cell **504**. The percentage may be selected according to a desired accuracy level in view of Equation (9) above for the number 'N' of mobile stations required to obtain a desired accuracy level. In the method illustrated by FIG. **6A**, reducing the coverage area may eliminate the effect that outliers may have on the accuracy of the cell center estimate. Outliers would include outlier mobile stations **620** that are sufficiently far from the rest of the mobile stations that the positions would make the distribution of the mobile stations less uniform.

FIG. **5C** shows an X-Y graph showing example mobile stations locations plotted on X-Y coordinates for four example cells. The cells in FIG. **5C** are a first cell **550**, a second cell **552**, a third cell **554** and a fourth cell **556**. The legend indicates where in the graph are located: a true cell position (for each of the four cells), a maximum likelihood cell estimate, the GPS locations for mobile stations in the first cell **550**, the GPS locations for mobile stations in the second cell **552**, the GPS locations for mobile stations in the third cell **554**, and the GPS locations for mobile stations in the fourth cell **556**. The graph in FIG. **5C** illustrates how mobile station locations may be mapped in cells

In the example shown in FIG. **6A**, the radius is minimized so as to cover a percentage (e.g. 95%) of the mobile stations (i.e. SPS receivers) in the cell **604**. As shown in FIG. **6A**, a radius 'r' may be defined by determining the distance of each of the mobile stations from the initial cell center estimate **612** using the mobile station location information. An initial radius 'r' may be defined as the distance from the initial estimated cell center to the most distant mobile station. The radius may then be reduced and compared with the distances of the mobile stations until the desired percentage of mobile stations are within a minimum radius. The locations of the mobile stations within the circle defined by the minimum radius 'r' may then be used in the equations above to determine another cell center estimate. The process may be periodically performed to adjust the cell center estimate to be more accurate. If the cell radius is stored in the database, the cell radius may be updated each time the cell center estimate is adjusted.

FIG. **6B** is a flowchart of a method **600** for obtaining a more accurate estimate of the cell center location. The method **600** illustrated by in FIG. **6B** may be performed in the cell center estimator **424** (in FIG. **4**) and may be performed subsequent to the method **500** illustrated in FIG. **5B**. The method **600** includes step **630** in which the locations (as determined by the SPS positioning system) of all N mobile stations may be retrieved from a storage element (such as a database with a structure similar to that of Table 1). At step **632**, the method determines the distance of each mobile station from the estimated cell center X_{ci} as calculated for example, by using method **500** in FIG. **5B**. At step **634**, the method **600** searches for the distance between the estimated cell center location and the mobile station that is farthest away from the estimated cell

center location. This distance is defined as the new initial cell radius (r_0). In step **636**, a minimized cell radius (r_1) is calculated as $r_1 = P\%$ of r_0 and in step **636**, or in a separate step, a loop counter is initialized to 1. At decision block **638**, a test is performed to determine if the circle defined by radius r_1 encompasses $P\%$ of the mobile stations in the cell. If the test determines that YES, $P\%$ of the mobile stations are in the circle defined by r_1 , then the cell radius r_0 is set to r_1 at step **640**. At step **642**, the calculation of the estimated cell center as performed using method **500** in FIG. **5B** is repeated using the new cell radius r_1 .

If at decision block **638**, $P\%$ of the mobile stations in the cell are not within the circle defined by r_1 , then at decision block **644** a second test is performed to determine if fewer than $P\%$ of the mobile stations in the cell are within the circle defined by r_0 . If fewer than $P\%$ of the mobile stations are within the circle defined by r_1 , then r_1 is increased by a predetermined value $\Delta r/1$ at step **646** to make the circle bigger. If decision block **644** determines that the number of mobile stations in the circle defined by r_1 is not fewer than $P\%$ of the mobile stations then it is greater than $P\%$ of the mobile stations. At step **648**, the radius is decreased by a value $\Delta r/1$. The method **600** in FIG. **6B** may loop at decision blocks **638** and **644** so that it may take many passes through decision blocks **638** and **644** to get to a radius for a circle that encompasses $P\%$ of the mobile stations. The loop counter, 1, is incremented at step **650** each time the loop is executed to decrease the incremental amount that the radius is increased or decreased.

The method **600** in FIG. **6B** may augment the method **500** of FIG. **5B** to determine a more accurate cell center location by filtering the sample size to include the mobile stations that are more uniformly distributed; that is, by removing any outliers that may limit the validity of assuming that the mobile stations are uniformly distributed. Another example of a method for increasing accuracy of a cell center estimate is shown in FIGS. **7A** & **7B**. In FIG. **7A**, a cell **704** is again illustrated as a circle **708** with an initial cell center estimate **712**. The cell **704** serves a number of mobile stations **710**. In the example shown in FIG. **7A**, the distance of the most distant mobile station in a percentage of the mobile stations served by the cell is minimized to remove the effect of outlier mobile stations **720**. The maximum distance in the percentage of mobile stations may be minimized by first determining the distance of each of the mobile stations from the initial cell center estimate **712** using the mobile station location information. The distances of the mobile stations are then analyzed by selecting the desired percentage of mobile stations that are closest to the estimated cell center location. The cell center estimator **424** may then re-calculate an estimated cell center using the mobile station locations for the selected percentage of the mobile stations. The process may be periodically performed to adjust the cell center estimate to be more accurate. If the cell radius is stored in the database, the cell radius may be updated each time the cell center estimate is adjusted.

FIG. **7B** is a flowchart of a method **700** for increasing accuracy of a cell center estimated location. The method **700** illustrated by in FIG. **7B** may be performed in the cell center estimator **424** (in FIG. **4**) and may be performed subsequent to the method **500** illustrated in FIG. **5B** and/or the method **600** illustrated in FIG. **6B**. The method **700** includes step **730** in which the locations (as determined by the SPS positioning system) of all N mobile stations may be retrieved from a storage element (such as a database with a structure similar to that of Table 1). At step **732**, the method determines the distance of each mobile station from the estimated cell center X_{ci} as calculated for example, by using method **500** in FIG.

5B, or by method **600** in FIG. **6B**. At step **734**, the method **700** searches for the distance between the estimated cell center location and the mobile station that is farthest away from the estimated cell center location. This distance is defined to be an initial cell radius r_0 . At step **736**, a function is performed to determine the distance between the estimated cell center X_{ci} and the mobile station that is closest to a radius, r_1 , that defines a circle that encompasses $P\%$ of the mobile stations in the cell. For example, this may be done by arranging the N mobile stations in order from closest to farthest relative to the estimated cell center location. Then the first $P\%$ of the N mobile stations are identified to be within circle defined by the reduced cell radius. A radius r_1 is then defined to be the cell radius at step **740**. At step **742**, the calculation of the estimated cell center location using method **500** in FIG. **5B** may then be performed using only the $P\%$ of the mobile stations identified in step **736**.

In some cases, it may not be possible to assume a uniform distribution of mobile stations in a cell. FIG. **8** schematically illustrates a cell **804** defined as a rectangle **808** in which mobile stations are distributed in three clusters **810**. Each cluster **810** may be analyzed by assuming each cluster **810** is evenly distributed and using the mobile station location information in each cluster **810** in equations (2) and (3), or in equation (5) above to determine an estimated center for each cluster **812**, **813**, **814**. To determine if the mobile station locations map out in clusters, a method may calculate an initial cell radius as described above for the entire cell. The method may then take fractional parts of the initial cell radius (e.g. $1/2$, $1/3$, $1/4$) and use the parts to draw circles in random locations within the cell. The areas within these circles may then be analyzed to determine the number of mobile station locations within the areas and whether the number is sufficient to provide a reasonably accurate estimate of a center location for the circles. Such a method may use equations (7), (8), and (9) above to determine the adequacy of the circle areas being analyzed. This process may be periodically updated to update the estimated cell center location. In addition, a check may periodically be performed to ensure that the mobile stations remain in an uneven distribution. The clusters may also be redefined periodically as mobile stations move within the cell **804**.

In some cases, a mobile station may not be able to locate itself using the SPS positioning system because it may be located in a space that does not receive wireless communications services. FIG. **9** illustrates an example in which a cell **904** is defined by its entire cell coverage area as a rectangle **908**. The mobile stations **912** served by the cell **904** may be found to cluster in one portion of the cell **904**. A complementary area **910**, which is defined as the whole cell coverage area **908** minus mobile phone clustered areas **912**, is illustrated in FIG. **9** as a shaded area. It is assumed that the whole cell coverage area **908** may be given as a specification, or a parameter available to the SPS server. The center **914** of the complementary area **910** may be used as an alternative location estimate when an SPS signal is not available. In this example, when a mobile station can not receive SPS signals, it may be assumed to be located in some no-signal zones of the cell **904**.

The methods described above with reference to FIGS. **5A-9** may be available and implemented in the cell center estimator **424** in FIG. **4**. Because the methods described above with reference to FIGS. **5A** and **7B** assume that the mobile stations in the cell are uniformly distributed, the cell center estimator **424** may include a method to determine if the mobile stations are uniformly distributed, or uniformly distributed in clusters (e.g. FIG. **8**).

It will be understood, and is appreciated by persons skilled in the art, that one or more functions, modules, units, blocks, processes, sub-processes, or process steps described above may be performed by hardware and/or software. If the process is performed by software, the software may reside in software memory (not shown) in the SPS server. The software in software memory may include an ordered listing of executable instructions for implementing logical functions (i.e., “logic” that may be implemented either in digital form such as digital circuitry or source code or in analog form such as analog circuitry or an analog source such as an analog electrical, sound or video signal), and may selectively be embodied in any computer-readable (or signal-bearing) medium for use by or in connection with an instruction execution system, apparatus, or device, such as a computer-based system, processor-containing system, or other system that may selectively fetch the instructions from the instruction execution system, apparatus, or device and execute the instructions. In the context of this document, a “computer-readable medium” and/or “signal-bearing medium” is any means that may contain, store, communicate, propagate, or transport the program for use by or in connection with the instruction execution system, apparatus, or device. The computer readable medium may selectively be, for example but not limited to, an electronic, magnetic, optical, electromagnetic, infrared, or semiconductor system, apparatus, device, or propagation medium. More specific examples, but nonetheless a non-exhaustive list, of computer-readable media would include the following: an electrical connection (electronic) having one or more wires, a portable computer diskette (magnetic), a RAM (electronic), a read-only memory “ROM” (electronic), an erasable programmable read-only memory (EPROM or Flash memory) (electronic), an optical fiber (optical), and a portable compact disc read-only memory “CDROM” (optical). Note that the computer-readable medium may even be paper or another suitable medium upon which the program is printed, as the program can be electronically captured, via for instance optical scanning of the paper or other medium, then compiled, interpreted or otherwise processed in a suitable manner if necessary, and then stored in a computer memory.

What is claimed is:

1. A method for estimating a cell location for a cell that provides wireless communication services to a plurality of mobile stations each mobile station having a Satellite Positioning System (“SPS”) receiver operating in a positioning system, the method comprising:

obtaining a mobile station location for each of N mobile stations, where N is greater than 1, having a cell identifier that identifies the cell, each mobile station location being determined using the positioning system; and calculating an estimated location of a cell center based on a statistical measure of the mobile station location of the N mobile stations in the cell where the statistical measure is a maximum likelihood location,

wherein calculating the estimated location of the cell center based on the maximum likelihood location further comprises:

obtaining a variance, σ_{ij}^2 , of a true position of the mobile station j relative to a true cell center position;

obtaining an SPS variance, V_j , for each mobile station, j, in the cell,

calculating a cell location variance, V_{ij} , of a true position of each mobile station j in the cell relative to the estimated cell center location as a function of σ_{ij}^2 and V_j , and

using the variance, V_{ij} , of each mobile station j of N to determine the maximum likelihood location.

2. The method of claim 1 including:

determining if the end mobile stations are uniformly distributed in the cell before calculating the estimated location of the cell center.

3. The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of: determining an initial cell radius, r_0 ; and setting $\sigma_{ij}^2 = (r_0/2)^2$.

4. The method of claim 1 where the step of calculating the estimated location of the cell center is based on a mean mobile station location, which further comprises:

for the N mobile stations, calculating the mean using:

$$\text{mean mobile station location} = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{j=1}^N \hat{X}_j \text{ where } \hat{X}_j \text{ is a vector}$$

representation of each mobile station j=1 to N.

5. A method for approximating a current mobile station location for a mobile station comprising:

retrieving a cell identifier for the mobile station;

calculating an estimated cell center location by performing the method of claim 1; and

defining the approximate current mobile station location to be the estimated cell center location.

6. A non-transitory computer readable medium having a plurality of instructions for performing programmed functions including the method of claim 1.

7. A system for estimating a cell center location in a satellite positioning system (“SPS”) comprising:

a SPS server connected to the SPS system to retrieve a plurality of mobile station locations from mobile stations in a cell in a wireless communication system, each mobile station comprising an SPS receiver;

a SPS database for storing the plurality of mobile station locations and a cell identifier to identify the cell in which the mobile station is obtaining wireless communications service; and

a cell center location estimator for:

calculating an estimated cell center location by obtaining N mobile station locations, where N is greater than 1, distributed in a cell i and calculating a statistical measure of the mobile station locations, where the statistical measure is a maximum likelihood mobile station location,

determining distances between the estimated cell center location and each of the N mobile stations in the cell, determining an initial cell radius by determining the distance between the estimated cell center location and the mobile station that is farthest away from the estimated cell center location,

determining a minimized radius r_1 as P % of the initial cell radius,

determining if P % of the N mobile stations in the cell are located within a circle defined by r_1 , and

if P % of the N mobile stations in the cell are located within a circle defined by r_1 , then determining a new estimated cell center location based on a maximum likelihood location of the P % of the N mobile stations.

8. The system of claim 7 where the SPS database stores a horizontal variance, V_j of each mobile station location as

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determined by the SPS positioning system; and the cell center location estimator further comprises:

a variance calculation function for calculating a variance of a true position of each of the N mobile stations relative to an estimated cell center as a function of V_j ; and

a maximum likelihood mobile station location function for calculating the maximum likelihood mobile station location as a function of the variance of the true position of each of the N mobile stations relative to the estimated cell center location and the N mobile station locations.

9. The system of claim 8 where:

the variance calculation function calculates the variance of the true position of each of the N mobile stations relative to the estimated cell center location using:

$$V_{ij} = \begin{bmatrix} \sigma_{ij}^2 & 0 \\ 0 & \sigma_{ij}^2 \end{bmatrix} + V_j,$$

where σ_{ij}^2 is a variance of a true position of the mobile station j relative to a true cell center position, and where $\sigma_{ij}^2 = (r_0/2)^2$ where r_0 is the initial cell radius; and the maximum likelihood mobile station location function calculates the maximum likelihood mobile station location using:

$$\hat{X}_{ci} = \left[\sum_{j=1}^N V_{ij}^{-1} \right]^{-1} \sum_{j=1}^N V_{ij}^{-1} \hat{X}_j$$

for the cell i, where N is the number of mobile stations in the cell.

10. The system of claim 7 where the cell center location estimator further comprises a mean mobile station location function to calculate a mean mobile station location of the N mobile stations.

11. The system of claim 10 where the mean mobile station location function calculates the mean mobile station location using:

$$\text{mean mobile station location} = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{j=1}^N \hat{X}_j \text{ where } \hat{X}_j \text{ is a vector}$$

representation of each mobile station j=1 to N.

12. The system of claim 7 where the cell center location estimator further comprises a mobile station location filter to find a minimum radius defining a circle around a first estimated cell center location that includes a selected percentage of the N mobile station locations where the selected percentage of the N mobile station locations are used by the cell center location estimator to calculate the estimated cell center location.

13. The system of claim 7 where the cell center location estimator further comprises a mobile station location filter to select a selected percentage of the N mobile station location that are closest to a first estimated cell center location where the selected percentage of N mobile stations is used by the cell center location estimator to calculate a second estimated cell center location.

14. The system of claim 7 further comprising:

a cluster center location estimator for defining a plurality of clusters of mobile stations in the cell, each cluster con-

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taining a number N_c of mobile stations where the cell center location estimator is used to determine the cluster center location for $N=N_c$.

15. A non-transitory computer readable medium having programmed instructions for operation in a wireless communication system that uses a satellite positioning system ("SPS"), the computer readable medium comprising:

a SPS database interface for retrieving data relating to a plurality of mobile stations in a cell of the wireless communications system, the data including, for each mobile station, a mobile station location and a cell identifier to identify the cell in which the mobile station is obtaining wireless communications service; and

a plurality of programmed instruction for:

calculating an estimated cell center location by obtaining N mobile station locations, where N is greater than 1, distributed in a cell i and calculating a statistical measure of the mobile station locations, where the statistical measure is a maximum likelihood mobile station location,

determining distances between the estimated cell center location and each of the N mobile stations in the cell, determining an initial cell radius by determining the distance between the estimated cell center location and the mobile station that is farthest away from the estimated cell center location,

determining a distance between the estimated cell center location and the mobile station that is closest to a radius r1 that defines a circle containing P % of the N mobile stations in the cell, and

determining a new estimated cell center location based on the maximum likelihood location of the P % of the N mobile stations.

16. The computer readable medium according to claim 15 where the SPS database stores a horizontal variance, V_j of each mobile station location as determined by the SPS positioning system; and the computer readable medium further comprises:

a second plurality of programmed instructions for calculating a variance of a true position of each of the N mobile stations relative to an estimated cell center as a function of V_j ; and

a third plurality of programmed instructions for calculating the maximum likelihood mobile station location as a function of the variance of the true position of each of the N mobile stations relative to the estimated cell center location and the N mobile station locations.

17. The computer readable medium according to claim 15 further comprising a fourth plurality of programmed instructions to calculate a mean mobile station location of the N mobile stations.

18. The computer readable medium according to claim 15 further comprising a fifth plurality of programmed instructions to find a minimum radius defining a circle around a first estimated cell center location that includes a selected percentage of the N mobile station locations where the selected percentage of the N mobile station locations are used by the cell center location estimator to calculate the estimated cell center location.

19. The computer readable medium according to claim 15 further comprising a sixth plurality of programmed instructions to select a selected percentage of the N mobile station location that are closest to a first estimated cell center location where the selected percentage of N mobile stations is used by the cell center location estimator to calculate a second estimated cell center location.

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20. The computer readable medium according to claim **15** further comprising:

a seventh plurality of programmed instructions for defining a plurality of clusters of mobile stations in the cell, each cluster containing a Number N_c of mobile stations where the plurality of programmed instruction for calculating the estimated cell center location is used to determine the cluster center location for $N=N_c$.

21. An apparatus in a satellite positioning system (“SPS”) comprising:

a first interface to a SPS database for retrieving from storage in the SPS database a plurality of mobile station locations corresponding to a plurality of mobile stations operating in a cell of the wireless communication system and a cell identifier to identify the cell in which the mobile station is obtaining wireless communications service; and

a cell center location estimator for:

calculating an estimated cell center location by obtaining N mobile station locations, where N is greater than 1, distributed in a cell i and calculating a statistical measure of the mobile station locations, where the statistical measure is a maximum likelihood mobile station location, and

testing the mobile station locations to determine if the mobile stations are clustered by:

determining an initial cell radius,

defining a plurality of circles having radii less than the initial cell radius with centers at random locations in the cell,

determining if each of the plurality of circles defines an area containing a cluster of uniformly distributed mobile station locations, and

for each of the plurality of circles that defines a cluster of uniformly distributed mobile station locations, determining an estimated cluster center location based on a maximum likelihood location of the mobile stations in the cluster.

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22. The apparatus of claim **21** where the first interface to the SPS database retrieves a horizontal variance, V_j of each mobile station location as determined by the SPS positioning system; and the cell center location estimator further comprises:

a variance calculation function for calculating a variance of a true position of each of the N mobile stations relative to an estimated cell center as a function of V_j ; and

a maximum likelihood mobile station location function for calculating the maximum likelihood mobile station location as a function of the variance of the true position of each of the N mobile stations relative to the estimated cell center location and the N mobile station locations.

23. The apparatus of claim **21** where the cell center location estimator further comprises a mean mobile station location function to calculate a mean mobile station location of the N mobile stations.

24. The apparatus of claim **21** where the cell center location estimator further comprises a mobile station location filter to find a minimum radius defining a circle around a first estimated cell center location that includes a selected percentage of the N mobile station locations where the selected percentage of the N mobile station locations are used by the cell center location estimator to calculate the estimated cell center location.

25. The apparatus of claim **21** where the cell center location estimator further comprises a mobile station location filter to select a selected percentage of the N mobile station location that are closest to a first estimated cell center location where the selected percentage of N mobile stations is used by the cell center location estimator to calculate a second estimated cell center location.

26. The apparatus of claim **21** further comprising:

a cluster center estimator for defining a plurality of clusters of mobile stations in the cell, each cluster containing a number N_c of mobile stations where the cell center location estimator is used to determine the cluster center location for $N=N_c$.

* * * * *

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
CERTIFICATE OF CORRECTION

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Page 1 of 1

It is certified that error appears in the above-identified patent and that said Letters Patent is hereby corrected as shown below:

Column 16, claim 2, line 2, "end" should be --N--.

Signed and Sealed this
Twenty-sixth Day of February, 2013



Teresa Stanek Rea
Acting Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office